

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FBIS REACTION REPORT  
7 NOVEMBER 1969

## CONTENTS

SUMMARY . . . . .	i
I. VIETNAMESE COMMUNIST MEDIA	
The DRV . . . . .	1
The Liberation Front . . . . .	4
II. OTHER COMMUNIST COUNTRIES	
The USSR . . . . .	7
East Europe . . . . .	9
The CPR . . . . .	12
Cuba . . . . .	13
III. NONCOMMUNIST COUNTRIES	
Western Europe . . . . .	14
Far East . . . . .	16
The Middle East . . . . .	18

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FBIS REACTION REPORT  
7 NOVEMBER 1969

i

## FOREIGN RADIO AND PRESS REACTION TO PRESIDENT NIXON'S 3 NOVEMBER ADDRESS ON VIETNAM

### S U M M A R Y

#### VIETNAMESE COMMUNIST MEDIA

HANOI: Hanoi's first reaction to the President's speech came in a 4 November radio commentary, broadcast in the domestic service, which labeled the speech a "brazen challenge" to the demands by American and world opinion that the United States end the war and completely withdraw its troops from South Vietnam. Hanoi press and official reaction--in the form of a DRV Government statement--was not broadcast until the 6th. The government statement says the U.S. "warlike and aggressive policy" is shown by the President's statement that he "will seek peace by implementing the plan of Vietnamization of the war." And it claims that the announcement that "only ground combat troops" will be withdrawn means that the remaining forces "will permanently occupy South Vietnam."

The DRV Government statement did not acknowledge the President's remarks on private contacts--saying only that he "distorted the truth about the situation of negotiations with a view to leading people to believe that he has good will." But minutes after the statement was broadcast, Hanoi radio carried the texts of the President's 15 July letter and Ho Chi Minh's 25 August reply. Some three and a half hours later, VNA carried the account of the 6 November Paris session which reported that Xuan Thuy had questioned the President's motive in releasing the exchange of correspondence with Ho and in revealing the private talks between the U.S. and DRV delegates. The statements at the session as well as other Hanoi propaganda stresses that the necessary factor for a settlement is an end to U.S. "aggression" and a total withdrawal of U.S. troops.

THE FRONT: The Liberation Front responded to the speech somewhat less promptly than Hanoi, with the first reaction appearing on the 5th. A Liberation Radio commentary that day entitled "A Speech of War, A Typical Example of Nixon's Stubborn and Warlike Nature" was characteristically more bellicose and inflammatory than the

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FBIS REACTION REPORT

7 NOVEMBER 1969

ii

comment from Hanoi. A PRG Government statement was issued a day after the DRV statement. It says routinely that the basic issues are a total U.S. troop withdrawal and allowing the South Vietnamese to settle their own affairs. PRG Foreign Minister Mme. Binh declared at the Paris session that no one could be deceived about what the President says about initiatives in "public, private, or secret negotiations," since he indicated that he does not trust negotiations.

#### OTHER COMMUNIST COUNTRIES

USSR: Calling the speech "propaganda" and forecasting that it will not calm the wave of protests against the war, Moscow commentators say the President offered "nothing new" and is still avoiding the path to a settlement--withdrawal of U.S. troops and allowing the Vietnamese to settle their own affairs. Podgornyy, commenting briefly on the speech in his October Revolution anniversary address on 6 November, says it showed that "a sober approach" to a Vietnam solution "has not yet prevailed in U.S. ruling circles." Moscow refers only obliquely to the President's statements about a plan agreed upon with Saigon for the withdrawal of all ground combat troops, instead criticizing "Vietnamization" and complaining that the President gave no timetable for a troop withdrawal. Moscow does not acknowledge the President's reference to private peace initiatives. And in keeping with its reticence about a Soviet role in a settlement, Moscow also fails to acknowledge that the President said he had met with Soviet representatives to enlist their help.

EAST EUROPE: There is press comment from all of Moscow's allies except Romania, which reported the speech with no special prominence. Most of the comment focuses on criticism of Vietnamization and calls for an unconditional and total U.S. troop withdrawal. Unlike Moscow, some East European media report the President's disclosure of his exchange of letters with Ho Chi Minh and his reference to other private contacts, but none acknowledge that the USSR was among those approached.

Belgrade's reaction, uniformly negative, is expressed authoritatively in the party weekly KOMUNIST, which comments that President Nixon has passed up an opportunity to extricate the United States from the "already lost" Vietnam war and views the Vietnam policy outlined in the speech as doomed to failure.

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FBIS REACTION REPORT  
7 NOVEMBER 1969

iii

Tirana says the President repeated "all his previous demagogical statements" and assails Vietnamization and the President's failure to set a timetable for withdrawal.

THE CPR: Peking media have yet to mention the speech, but the Administration's "peace" policy, including policy on Vietnam, is attacked derisively in a commentary carried in NCNA's Chinese-language transmission on 4 November. Also on the 4th Peking rebroadcast a 29 October commentary attacking Vietnamization.

CUBA: Havana comment interprets the speech as tantamount to an admission that the United States has no choice but to end its "aggression" in Vietnam and withdraw.

#### NONCOMMUNIST COUNTRIES

WEST EUROPE: Many commentators criticize the President's speech on the grounds it contained no new proposals or initiatives. Some, while regarding this complaint as valid, argue that he has little room left for maneuver. Most British, French, and West German comment takes a pessimistic view of the chances that the speech will move the war nearer to a negotiated settlement. Many also express the conviction that the President's determination will only further polarize already divided American opinion.

FAR EAST: Saigon media gave fairly wide publicity to the speech, with radio and press comment hailing its firm restatement of the American commitment. Commentators in Thailand, Nationalist China, and South Korea also express a feeling of relief at the steadfastness of tone. Japanese newspaper editorials are largely critical, first at the failure of the speech to contain anything new and, second, on the grounds that it lessens the chance of a negotiated settlement.

OTHER AREAS: Cairo's comment is sharply accusatory, while the Athens press sees the speech as evidence that the President is a "strong leader." No editorial comment is available from Latin America or Africa.

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FBIS REACTION REPORT

7 NOVEMBER 1969

- 1 -

## I. VIETNAMESE COMMUNIST MEDIA

## THE DRV

A Hanoi radio domestic service commentary broadcast at 1440 GMT on 4 November was the first DRV propaganda reaction to the President's speech. Some three and a half hours later, VNA carried the statements by the DRV and PRG press spokesmen in Paris. Earlier that day, at 0924 GMT, VNA's service channel had transmitted the text of the President's speech from Hanoi to the VNA office in Paris, and the statements by the DRV and PRG delegation spokesmen in Paris were carried in the VNA service transmission from Paris to Hanoi at 1324 and 1439, respectively.

The statement by the DRV press spokesman in Paris acknowledged none of the substance of the speech in saying it shows that the Nixon Administration not only has followed the Johnson policy but has intensified the war. Xuan Thuy's "initial remarks" on the speech, which VNA carried in English on the 5th, similarly expressed the general criticism that "the speech was not aimed at seeking peace but at pursuing and prolonging the war" and that it "was a speech running counter to the American people's aspirations and opposing the 15 October and 15 November movements in the United States."

The Hanoi radio commentary ridiculed the President's announcement that a secret timetable has been set up for the complete withdrawal of U.S. ground combat troops; it said his statement that he will not make the timetable public means "there is no timetable at all" and that he hopes to appease public opinion with vague promises. The commentary also said "Nixon brazenly threatened our people" when he said he would not hesitate "to take strong measures if enemy action jeopardizes U.S. forces."

On the 5th, Hanoi radio broadcast a roundup of U.S. criticism of the speech, and VNA English carried a commentary along the lines of the radio talk the day before. The first press and official reaction came on 6 November with the release of a Commentator article in the DRV party paper NHAN DAN and a DRV Government statement.\*

---

\* The President's 16 September announcement of the second phase of U.S. troop withdrawals along with his 18 September UNGA address prompted a DRV Government statement on 21 September. (A PRG Government statement issued on 20 October was described more broadly as "denouncing the stubborn position and crafty attitude of the Nixon Administration in the settlement of the South Vietnam problem.")

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

REACTION REPORT  
7 NOVEMBER 1969

- 2 -

The NHAN DAN Commentator article said President Nixon had to acknowledge that the war was causing deep division at home and criticism from friends of the United States abroad, but that throughout the rest of the address "Nixon used distortions and deceptions to misrepresent the cause of the war, justify U.S. aggressive and colonialist policy, and boast of his good will." Like the radio commentary on the 4th, it acknowledged the President's remarks on a plan for the withdrawal of all ground combat troops and went on to say that in setting unrealizable conditions, the troop withdrawal program is merely a scheme to continue the aggressive war against Vietnam. The paper claimed that the speech had touched off "a stormy wave of protest throughout the United States and the world" and that many U.S. congressmen have expressed their disappointment because the speech represented the "same old discredited policy." It concluded that "the Vietnamese people energetically denounce the President's maneuver and plot" and that their stand as expounded in the NFLSV 10-point solution is "correct and clear."

The Government statement is similar to the routine propaganda in charging that the Vietnamization plan is merely a way of continuing the war. It says that the Americans will pull out their troops "drop by drop and will not fix a timetable for the total withdrawal of U.S. troops" and that by announcing that they will only pull out their combat ground troops they in fact have shown that the remaining forces will permanently occupy Vietnam. The statement also charges the President with resorting to "slander and sophistry" to distort the truth about the origin of the war.

Xuan Thuy, speaking at the 6 November Paris session, also accused the President of "slander." And the VNA account says that in analyzing the speech, Thuy pointed out that "it contained nothing new but was merely intended to prepare for the continuation of the war." Attacking the President's troop withdrawal plan, Thuy denounced the "refusal to announce the timetable for the plan under the pretext that this would be detrimental to the progress which may be made at the Paris conference." And he echoed the the government statement when he scored the President's "roundabout contention aimed at covering up the U.S. scheme to withdraw troops in driblets and to prolong the war." Thuy also ridiculed the President's statement that the withdrawal would be made from strength, saying that the United States has "many times attempted to seek a position of strength, but always sunk more and more deeply into a position of weakness."

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FBIS REACTION REPORT  
7 NOVEMBER 1969

- 3 -

PRIVATE      The President's disclosure of his correspondence with  
CONTACTS      Ho Chi Minh had not been mentioned in the propaganda  
prior to Hanoi's broadcasting of the texts of the  
letters at 1445 GMT on 6 November. There were only vague references  
to the President's remarks on private meetings and secret diplomacy.  
Thus the Hanoi radio commentary on the 4th said cryptically that  
the President "has advanced the question of secret contacts aimed  
at misleading public opinion," and the VNA commentary on the 5th  
said that "to divert public opinion, the President also insinuated  
that private meetings were taking place between the belligerent  
parties." The NHAN DAN Commentator article, on the other hand, did  
not deny private contacts when it said the President "dealt at  
length with initiatives in the quest for peace and laid overemphasis  
on the private meetings. He also spoke vaguely about the other  
significant initiatives which must remain secret."

But the government statement leaves the whole issue ambiguous when  
it says that President Nixon distorted the truth about "the  
situation of negotiations with a view to leading people to believe  
that he has good will."

According to VNA, Thuy said that the President's public release of  
the texts of the letters exchanged by President Nixon and Ho Chi Minh  
and the President's mention of private negotiations between the  
U.S. and DRV delegates "were intended to make people believe that  
the Nixon Administration had endeavoured to explore every possible  
private avenue that might lead to a settlement, but could not  
achieve it because of the attitude of the 'other side.'" Thuy  
claimed that the "private talks" have brought no result because in  
private as well as public talks, the U.S. delegate "always clings  
to the U.S. aggressive standpoint"--demanding a mutual troop withdrawal  
and opposing the NFLSV's 10-point solution. Thuy said the DRV  
delegation had "time and again" emphasized that the way talks are  
held is not important and that the main problem is whether the  
United States is ready "to give up its aggressive stand" and  
sincerely wants to settle the problem on the basis of respect for  
the Vietnamese people's independence and right to self-determination.  
(The VNA account of the session does not indicate the substance  
of the give-and-take portion; but Nguyen Thanh Le indicated at his  
press conference following the session that a substantial amount  
of Thuy's rebuttal was addressed to "private talks." Le said Thuy  
criticized the U.S. side for "betraying a promise" by the President's  
mention of private contacts in his speech. Consistent with standard  
Hanoi practice, Le's remarks have been carried only in the VNA  
Paris-to-Hanoi service channel.)

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FBIS REACTION REPORT  
7 NOVEMBER 1969

- 4 -

VNA's account says Thuy brought out the "good will and serious attitude" of the Vietnamese people and DRV Government for settling the Vietnam question peacefully and recalled the practical steps taken by the DRV Government in that direction. The account of the session does not, however, go into detail on this portion of Thuy's speech, in which he mentioned the dates of "concrete actions taken"--28 January 1967, 30 December 1967, 3 April 1968, and more recently the opening of the two-party talks on 13 May 1968, the four-party talks on 25 January, and the release of the NFLSV's 10-point solution on 8 May 1969. Thuy quoted the statement in Ho's letter to the President that "with good will on either side, we might arrive at common efforts with a view to finding a correct solution to the Vietnam problem." He also cited Ho's testament to confirm that if the United States continues the war, the Vietnamese people "must resolutely fight till total victory" and "may have to sacrifice a great deal of wealth and manpower." Thuy declared that "in unity and one-mindedness, the entire Vietnamese people will unswervingly implement this testament."

The VNA account of Ambassador Lodge's statement says he "repeated the content of Nixon's 3 November speech, full of obdurate and warlike contentions."

## THE LIBERATION FRONT

Liberation Radio at 0200 GMT on the 5th carried the text of the statement by the PRG delegation spokesman in Paris, and at 0500 GMT on the 5th the radio broadcast a commentary and a roundup of U.S. and other foreign reactions to the speech. The commentary says the address consisted of "extremely brazen, intimidating, insolent, and history-distorting arguments" and is considered by "public opinion" as an "insult to the U.S. people's intelligence." It claims that the President's "perfidious, highly warlike, stubborn, and gunpowder-stinking" address has only added fuel to the antiwar struggle, and it cites UPI for the statement that the speech has in fact encouraged many people to participate in the November demonstrations.

The commentary does not directly acknowledge the President's announcement of a plan for complete withdrawal of combat ground troops; it says only that the President "lengthily boasted" about the plan for "Vietnamizing peace." Like Hanoi, it quotes the President's statement that he would not hesitate to carry out "strong and effective measures" to cope with a changed military situation. The PRG spokesman's statement says that the President "rehashed" his eight-point peace plan but reports none of the substance.

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY



FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FBIS REACTION REPORT  
7 NOVEMBER 1969

- 5 -

Like Hanoi, Liberation Radio rounds up critical U.S. comment and additionally quotes from antigovernment personalities in South Vietnam such as Tran Ngoc Lieng and bonze Thich Huyen Hoa.

Mme. Binh said at the 6 November Paris session that, as pointed out by "public opinion," the President's speech "only exposes still more clearly the obdurate position and perfidious attitude" of the Nixon Administration and that the President tried "his best" to justify the U.S. aggression against Vietnam over the past 15 years as well as his "present erroneous policy." She "deemed it necessary" to criticize his statements regarding the "Vietnamization of the search for peace," saying this policy is nothing too new and was instituted under a different name by President Johnson after the U.S. "failure" in the 1968 Tet offensive. She added her standard contention in claiming that the Nixon Administration's Vietnamization program is "in fact but the continuation and intensification of the war of aggression" and is not the way to put an end to the war but rather is the way to "prolong the war indefinitely."

Without acknowledging his reference to the Hue murders last year, Mme. Binh also noted President Nixon's concern that a precipitate withdrawal of forces from South Vietnam would lead to "massacres" in that country; she rejoined that "everybody" knows that those responsible for the past and present "reprisals, terrorism, and mass murders" in South Vietnam are the "U.S. aggressors" and the Saigon administration. Mme. Binh described the PRG-NFLSV attitude as one of "broad union and national concord" as manifested in the 10-point solution, point five of which prohibits terror, reprisal, and discrimination against people who collaborated with either side.

An LPA commentary on the 7th claims that in order to preserve the honor of the United States and gain the reputation of a "peacemaker" to win the 1972 presidential elections, Mr. Nixon "should have responded" to the demands of the Vietnamese and American peoples by ending the war and withdrawing all U.S. and allied forces. But, the commentary notes, "Nixon has taken a completely different course" and has fully revealed himself as a "war maniac with nefarious ambitions."

The PRG Government statement, publicized on the 7th, says the President "brazenly pleaded for the U.S. policy of stubbornly prolonging the war," used "extremely cynical and crafty arguments," and "distorted historical facts." Characteristically, it describes

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FBIS REACTION REPORT  
7 NOVEMBER 1969

- 6 -

Vietnamization as a policy aimed at dragging out the war. Piecemeal troop withdrawals and "the so-called program for complete withdrawal of U.S. combat troops," it says, are "maneuvers to appease the American public" and to "cover up the scheme" of keeping a large number of troops in South Vietnam for a long time.

The statement says that the President made "fallacious allegations about the situation in Vietnam after the withdrawal," but it does not, like Mme. Binh, note that he warned of "massacres." It declares, in response, that "if the United States stops its aggression and brings home all American troops, then all disasters and destruction in South Vietnam will immediately end."

PRIVATE        Unlike Hanoi, Front comment does not discuss the  
CONTACTS        President's remarks on private contacts. Mme. Binh's  
                 remarks on the issue at the Paris session are not  
                 included in the VNA or LPA account, but the text of her formal  
                 statement is broadcast by Liberation Radio on the 7th--standard  
                 treatment of her statements each week. In reviewing the President's  
                 attempts to shift the blame for the Paris deadlock to the Vietnamese  
                 "people," she asserted that "nobody" can be deceived by what  
                 President Nixon said about "initiatives in 'public, private or  
                 secret negotiations.'" She declared that his mistrust of  
                 negotiations was demonstrated when he said he recognized that we  
                 might not succeed in bringing an end to the war through negotiations.  
                 Casting doubt on the President's "peace plan," she claimed that  
                 it is the United States which is obstructing progress by holding  
                 to its "absurd demands" such as the call for a mutual troop  
                 withdrawal.

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FBIS REACTION REPORT  
7 NOVEMBER 1969

- 7 -

## II. OTHER COMMUNIST COUNTRIES

## THE USSR

Moscow's comment stresses the "propaganda" nature of the speech and forecasts that it will not calm the wave of protests against the war. Commentators complain that the President offered "nothing new" and is still avoiding the way to a settlement--withdrawal of troops and allowing the Vietnamese to settle their own affairs.

Commenting on the speech in his October Revolution anniversary keynote speech on 6 November, Podgorny discusses none of the substance of the President's remarks in saying they showed that "a sober approach to the solution" of the Vietnam problem "has not yet prevailed in U.S. ruling circles." He repeats the stock line that there is "one thing required" for a just settlement--withdrawal of U.S. troops and an end to interference in the domestic affairs of the Vietnamese people. Routinely stressing Soviet support for the Vietnamese, Podgorny says Pham Van Dong's recent visit to the USSR was an "important landmark" in the relations between the two countries, recalls that new aid agreements were signed during the visit, and notes that a PRG/NFLSV Delegation led by Nguyen Huu Tho is now in the Soviet Union.

In a similar vein, a PRAVDA article by Mayevskiy on 6 November says the speech showed that a "rational" approach to solving the Vietnam problem "has not yet gained the upper hand in U.S. ruling circles." Like Podgorny's speech, the article ignores the substance of the President's remarks; Mayevskiy concludes that the speech proceeds not from a wish to stop aggression and seek a peaceful settlement, but from pursuit of "the previous policy, from a desire to dictate 'from a position of strength,'" and from a refusal to solve the "main problem"--the immediate withdrawal of U.S. troops.

The initial Washington-dated TASS report of the speech on 4 November--transmitted at 0844 GMT and in English at 0915 GMT, prior to Hanoi's first comment--cited "local observers" as saying the address was a "propaganda exercise" prompted by a desire to counter protests against the war. Routine-level followup comment, including a TASS commentary by Kharkov on the 4th, took a similar approach. IZVESTIYA's Washington correspondent, in an item summarized by TASS on the same day, observed that the President accused the "vocal minority" of striving to dictate policy to the nation; he

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

IBIS REACTION REPORT  
7 NOVEMBER 1969

- 8 -

adds that American commentators have pointed out that such an approach is "hardly conducive" to an end to criticism. Reportage and comment, noting that the speech is being received unfavorably at home and abroad, cites criticism by several Senators, including McGovern, Javits, Gore, Fulbright, Mansfield, and Kennedy, and by a number of people connected with the antiwar movement.

Unlike Hanoi, Moscow does not directly acknowledge that the President referred to a plan in being for the withdrawal of all ground combat troops, instead complaining that he did not advance a program or timetable for withdrawal. TASS' brief summary of the DRV Government statement on the address omits the critical remarks on the withdrawal of "ground combat forces." A 6 November IZVESTIYA article by Matveyev broaches the issue obliquely, saying that an end to the war "requires no complex, cunning prescriptions"--the troops must be withdrawn, and this can be done "no less quickly than the troops were transferred to South Vietnam." The assurances that the United States has a "plan for the withdrawal of American troops" but that the dates cannot be divulged, Matveyev says, sound like a "repeat" of what President Johnson said.

A 5 November Moscow broadcast in English to the United Kingdom takes the British Foreign Office to task for allegedly claiming that the "Nixon plan" envisages a "complete pull-out" of American troops; the commentator asserts that the President mentioned no deadline for a "stop to the intervention" and stated that a pull-out would "depend on the situation in South Vietnam." Even the Voice of America, the broadcast adds, "did not risk claiming that the Nixon plan provides for the complete withdrawal of U.S. forces" from South Vietnam. A commentary by Kozyakov broadcast to North America on the 4th says the President referred to a "phased withdrawal with a secret schedule" and adds that judging by withdrawals so far, this could go on for 10 years. A domestic service commentary by Lipovetskiy on the same day says the withdrawal will depend on the degree of success of Vietnamization, and a domestic service commentary by Druzhinin on the 5th comments to the same effect. Druzhinin expresses "serious alarm" over the President's statement that if the level of enemy activity considerably increases, the United States may "have to change its plans"; this means, says Druzhinin, that the United States retains the right to discard the Vietnamization plan and move to a new stage of escalation.

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FBIS REACTION REPORT  
7 NOVEMBER 1969

- 9 -

Moscow avoids mentioning the President's comment on private peace initiatives and--consistent with its reticence on the question of a Soviet role in a settlement--does not acknowledge that he said he had met with Soviet representatives to enlist their assistance. TASS' 6 November account of the Paris meeting that day says Xuan Thuy "analyzed" the President's speech "in detail" but ignores his criticism of the President for revealing that private talks have been held.

## EAST EUROPE

Prague, Warsaw, Budapest, and Bucharest media reported the speech more promptly than Moscow did, and newspapers from all of the USSR's East European allies except Romania have commented on it. The only available reaction from Bucharest takes the form of brief factual accounts of the speech and of critical comments from U.S. sources. The Romanian news agency AGERPRES, reviewing the Bucharest press, cites "President Nixon's speech on the Vietnam war" in the course of a fairly long list of foreign news topics, giving it no special prominence.

Authoritative comment comes from Bulgarian Vice Premier Tano Tsolov, in the course of remarks at the 5 November signing of new aid agreements: Tsolov briefly criticizes the notion of Vietnamization and repeats the stock demand for unconditional and total U.S. withdrawal. Polish editorial comment--similarly focused on Vietnamization and calling for withdrawal--appears in the army paper ZOLNIERZ WOJNOSCI and the United Peasant Party organ DZIENNIK LUDOWY, but not so far in the central Communist Party daily TRYBUNA LUDU.

Prague, Budapest, Warsaw, and Sofia--unlike Moscow--briefly report the President's comments on his exchange of letters with Ho Chi Minh, and a Prague CTK item says that in addition to the letter to Ho, the President disclosed "several cases of secret and private contacts through a third party, which also failed." An article in Sofia's KOOPERATIVNO SELO on the 5th briefly notes that the President "mentioned a number of initiatives connected with establishing contacts with the other side" but says he did not announce anything concrete about proposals that would be acceptable to the other side. Moscow's allies do not mention that the USSR was one of the potential intermediaries approached.

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FBIS REACTION REPORT  
7 NOVEMBER 1969

- 10 -

East European press and radio commentaries generally stress that there was "nothing new" in the speech and complain that the President failed to announce either a further troop withdrawal or a cease-fire. Expressing "disappointment," commentators also point to criticisms voiced by various American spokesmen. Some Warsaw comment pictures the speech as outlining a "tougher line": TRYBUNA LUDU and a PAP commentary say the speech included an apologia for the acts of the Administration's predecessors and contained all the theses of current U.S. Vietnam policy. It even revived the Dulles "domino theory" on a world scale, these commentaries say, by pointing to the "frightful consequences" in various parts of the world that would flow from a withdrawal of U.S. troops. The PAP commentary says the speech "bristled with threats" and remarks that the President even failed to mention the Geneva agreements.

A Sofia domestic service commentary says the President strongly defended the "supermilitaristic course of the war and U.S. commitments to the free world"; it adds that in his comments on the consequences of a troop withdrawal, he "spread the principles of U.S. intervention far beyond the geographic borders of Southeast Asia." The commentator adds that the President, speaking more as commander-in-chief of the U.S. armed forces, thus "disclosed in an unheard-of manner the U.S. aspiration to world domination."

Of available comment, only East Berlin's fails to mention the President's comments on the plan, agreed upon with Saigon, for complete withdrawal of U.S. ground combat troops. Prague's CTK on the 4th cites the President's warning that if increased enemy action jeopardized remaining U.S. troops, the United States would "take strong and effective measures." A RUDE PRAVO commentary reviewed by CTK on the 5th criticizes the lack of specifics about the plan, saying that "such vague statements promise practically nothing." The commentator questions the plan's actual existence, its timetable, and the conditions on which it is contingent. A Prague domestic service commentary on the 4th calls the plan a refurbishing of old ideas and methods, its fundamental idea being the retention of a substantial number of troops--perhaps 300,000--as long as necessary to protect the Saigon regime. This, says RUDE PRAVO, is "tantamount to a plan for the perpetual presence of U.S. support troops in South Vietnam."

An article in Budapest's NEPSZABADSAG on the 5th, noting that the President did not reveal a timetable for the troop withdrawals, says that one reason for this--implied by the President when he said he would resort to "vigorous and effective countermeasures if

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FBIS REACTION REPORT  
7 NOVEMBER 1969

- 11 -

U.S. losses mounted"--is that the plan is only conditional and that escalation could begin again if the other side fails to fulfill U.S. conditions. NEPSZABADSAG stresses that the plan does not provide for the withdrawal of "all" U.S. troops and adds that even the most optimistic Washington estimates expect troops "ranging in the hundreds of thousands" to remain in 1971.

Commenting only obliquely on the troop-withdrawal plan, a 4 November East Berlin domestic service commentary, complaining that the President did not announce a complete and unconditional troop withdrawal, notes without elaboration that "all he had to offer was a promise of a partial pullout" of troops and that "he failed to say when this would happen." A domestic service broadcast the next day comments in a similar vein.

**YUGOSLAVIA** Belgrade commentators, who have been repeatedly expressing hope for the success of the Paris talks, express disappointment that the President "lost" an opportunity to move toward peace and that he acted in "disregard" of world public opinion. An appraisal to this effect appears at a notably authoritative level in a 6 November article in the party weekly KOMUNIST. As reviewed by TANYUG, the article says the President has "omitted" his chance to extricate the United States "from the already lost Vietnam war." Alleging that "understanding" of Mr. Nixon has "drastically dropped" both in the United States and throughout the world because of the speech, KOMUNIST forecasts that the Administration's Vietnam policy "will inevitably bring Nixon to the political fate of his predecessor."

In earlier comment, registering a uniformly negative reaction, the newspaper VJESNIK on 5 November interprets the speech as an exercise in domestic propaganda designed to pacify the dissenters, who are "shocked by the failure of U.S. Vietnam policy." Although the President may have partially succeeded in this goal, the paper adds, "the address did not make any substantive contribution to end the war" and was not responsive to the demands for peace "by millions of people throughout the world." A dispatch from Belgrade Radio's Washington correspondent on the 4th reported that by refusing to heed appeals for American disentanglement from the war, the President "has jeopardized his political career and opened a phase of intensified internal confrontation in the United States."

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

THIS REACTION REPORT

7 NOVEMBER 1969

- 12 -

ALBANIA A domestic service broadcast on 5 November, repeated by ATA the next day, represents the only comment from Tirana to date. In a speech which "roused another wave of indignation among the American people," the commentary says, the President "reiterated all his previous demagogical statements" of his Vietnam policy, "especially the core of the devilish eight-point plan." The commentary says the President "openly stated that he was not thinking of announcing a definite time" for a troop withdrawal. It adds that the Vietnamization program is merely an effort to intensify aggression by increasing assistance to the Saigon regime, coupled as it is on the one hand with "some unimportant troop reductions" and on the other with a "peaceful settlement through negotiations and reciprocal withdrawal."

On the 6th ATA's review of the Tirana press notes briefly that "the press informs of the cunning maneuver of Nixon in his speech of 3 November to cover the continuation of aggression in Vietnam."

## THE CPR

Peking media have yet to mention the President's speech, but the Administration's foreign "peace" policy, including policy on Vietnam, is attacked derisively in a commentary carried in NCNA's Chinese-language transmission on 4 November. On the same day the Peking radio broadcast a talk to the CPR domestic audience on the President's Vietnamization policy and his "refusal" to withdraw all U.S. troops. (The radio attributed this talk to a member of a PLA unit; it was originally broadcast by Peking in Vietnamese on 29 October and was said at that time to have also appeared in PEOPLE'S DAILY.)

Liberation radio appeared to refer to the 4 November Peking broadcast in a roundup on the 5th of U.S. and other foreign reaction to the President's speech. After quoting from a TASS report on the speech, Liberation Radio said: "Only a few hours after Nixon delivered his address, Peking radio broadcast a commentary saying that Nixon definitely did not agree to unconditionally withdraw all U.S. aggressive troops from South Vietnam." Whether the Front radio intended to imply that Peking had actually commented on the speech is unclear. But its citing of the Peking broadcast after a reference to the TASS report may simply reflect Vietnamese communist care to give the USSR and CPR equal billing.

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY



FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FBIS REACTION REPORT

7 NOVEMBER 1969

- 13 -

## CUBA

The President's speech contained the first acknowledgement by a U.S. president "of the possibility of defeat" since the inception of U.S. involvement in Vietnam but offered nothing toward a solution, Havana commentators conclude. They base this assertion on the President's remarks that North Vietnam could neither defeat nor humiliate the United States, which they construe to mean that the United States now "has no choice but to put an end to its war of aggression and withdraw from Vietnam." Following the same line of reasoning, they interpret President Nixon's remarks on continued Vietnamization of the war as tantamount to reversion "to a historically defeated situation" similar to that earlier faced by President Johnson, who "Americanized" the war when South Vietnamese troops proved incapable of fulfilling a combat role. At the same time, Havana commentators express skepticism that President Nixon himself believes Vietnamization will succeed.

Speculating on the role "the famous domino theory" played in the speech, a participant in a Havana radio panel discussion offers a corollary of this theory: "If a puppet government supported by imperialism is susceptible to being defeated by its people," then "there is no guarantee" that any puppet government or any U.S. ally "would get complete support from the United States" in the future.

Referring to the U.S. antiwar movement, Havana commentators predict that the President's "dramatic and theatrical appeal" for unity will "only increase protests." This, they say, was immediately confirmed by the reaction of protesters throughout the country, and Havana expresses skepticism about the existence of a "great silent majority" among the American people.

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

7 NOVEMBER 1969

- 14 -

### III. NONCOMMUNIST COUNTRIES

#### WEST EUROPE

**BRITAIN** Comment in the principal British newspapers runs the gamut from the DAILY TELEGRAPH's conclusion that the President's speech constituted "a courageous act of leadership" to the GUARDIAN's complaint that it set forth "a policy for more war." The TIMES, taking a middle ground, says America's allies should "remember that a humiliating retreat could end in a new trend toward neo-isolationism." At the same time, the TIMES objects that President Nixon's policy "provides Hanoi with no incentive to settle now," but rather with an incentive "to wait and see" how strong Thieu's forces become in 1970-71, and then to strike harder if necessary when the American mood is against renewing the war.

The DAILY TELEGRAPH's editorial declares that the President is right to refrain from fixing a definite timetable for U.S. withdrawal. It recalls President Eisenhower's revelation, years after the event, that he had hinted at the possible use of tactical nuclear weapons just before the Korean armistice. "Conditions are entirely different today," the editorial says, "but it is to be hoped that Hanoi will be enlightened beyond doubt as to the possible consequences of stringing America along too far."

A Foreign Office statement termed the plan to withdraw all U.S. ground combat forces "an important contribution." In reaction, the communist MORNING STAR declared that the President's speech "is bad enough, but the British Government's immediate, unconditional, and slavish endorsement of it is even worse."

**FRANCE** Analyzing the speech in remarks at a cabinet meeting on 5 November, according to the Paris radio, French Foreign Minister Maurice Schumann reiterated France's "natural reserved attitude" and its conviction that a political settlement is essential to reestablish peace in Vietnam, through an agreement sought by the Geneva conference member states. Press comment ranges from the moderate rightist L'AUREOLE's favorable reaction, applauding the President for placing the blame on Hanoi and welcoming his resolve to persist in seeking decisive negotiations, to the communist L'HUMANITE's charge that the President made "a war speech" which can only aggravate the war.

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FBIS REACTION REPORT

7 NOVEMBER 1969

- 15 -

Other press comment includes the independent LES ECHOS' evaluation of the speech as "an acknowledgment of failure and an appeal for support from the silent majority" and the Gaullist PARIS-JOUR's forecast that the President has decided to continue the war until the 1972 elections and let his successor solve the "formidable task" of ending the war. Competent French political observers, according to AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE, are expressing "extreme surprise" at the tenor of the speech and the absence of "new elements" and are evincing concern over the consequent dashing of hopes for a new U.S. policy orientation.

WEST GERMANY While West German Chancellor Willy Brandt limited his comment on the speech to an expression of support for efforts to achieve a political solution, radio and press commentators throughout the Federal Republic express almost unanimous disappointment over the lack of new proposals and skepticism about any constructive international impact the speech might have. A statement in Brandt's behalf by Bonn spokesman Ahlers notes that Brandt agrees with the view that there can be no military solution to the Vietnam conflict, hopes for a positive response from Hanoi, and reiterates West German readiness to assist in the reconstruction of Vietnam after a settlement.

Deutschlandfunk's Washington correspondent declares that the speech erased any doubts that "the Johnson war has become a Nixon war" and "confirmed" that President Nixon has embraced the same ideological platform as that of his predecessor: the domino theory and the need to prevent undermining of confidence in U.S. steadfastness. Several other radio commentators point to a lack of new proposals, political conclusions, or initiatives and conclude that the speech was intended mostly to boost domestic support and morale and not for international impact.

Hamburg's independent DIE WELT also views the speech from this angle in perhaps the most sympathetic West German press comment available. It ranks the speech "among the politically most significant and courageous statements ever made by Nixon." DIE WELT sees the "hallmark of statesmanship" on the speech and credits the President with "great courage" and "an admirable amount" of responsibility for his decision to stake his entire future on his Vietnam policy. Like most German commentators, DIE WELT predicts a greater polarization of American opinion on the Vietnam issue as a result of the speech.

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

7 NOVEMBER 1969

- 16 -

**OTHER COUNTRIES**      The spectrum of Italian press comment, as reviewed by the Rome radio on 5 November, ranges from the Christian Democratic IL POPOLO's view that those who hoped for a turning point in U.S. Vietnam policy must have been "disappointed" to the communist L'UNITA's assertion that the President is running the risk of "rendering the Paris talks void by shifting the whole problem to the battlefield." L'UNITA criticizes the speech for its "clear and dramatic absence of alternatives." The Republican Party's LA VOCE REPUBBLICANA describes the speech as "fairly disappointing" in the wake of high expectations, and the Socialist AVANTI, expressing a "rather negative" opinion of the speech, sees a threat of "a new escalation" of the war if Hanoi and the NFSLSV reject the President's proposals.

An Austrian radio commentator views the speech largely as an attempt to gain a breathing spell amid congressional and Moratorium opposition to the President's Vietnam policy; he says that if the strong criticism from these sources resumes now, the speech was in vain. Spanish newspapers reviewed by the Madrid radio stress the lack of new proposals and similarity of the Nixon and Johnson policies.

Swedish press comments reviewed by Stockholm radio indicate surprise over the President's "determined refusal" to yield to his critics' demands for further concessions on Vietnam and envisage a "growing polarization" of U.S. public opinion as a result. Harsh comment comes from the liberal DAGENS NYHETER, which asserts that the speech shows the President "in his true light" and describes him as "rather poorly informed about what is actually happening in the country he has been elected to lead." The Social Democratic AFTONBLADET assails the President for using the "primitive terminology of the cold war" in explaining why the United States is in Vietnam, adding that "even the most well-meaning of his critics must doubt whether he has the strength of will to make the radical reappraisal of Vietnam policy" necessary. The Conservative SVENSKA DAGBLADET calls the speech an "anticlimax" after the speculation about new troop withdrawals and predicts even wider divisions among Americans.

## FAR EAST

**SOUTH VIETNAM**      The Saigon radio and press provided fairly extensive publicity for the President's speech and for President Thieu's statement that it constituted "one of the most important and outstanding messages by a U.S. president." Most of the Saigon newspapers portray the speech as proof that the United

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY      FBIS REACTION REPORT  
7 NOVEMBER 1969

- 17 -

States is maintaining a firm, unwavering stand vis-a-vis its Vietnam ally. The mass-circulation SAIGON MOI says the fact that the speech contained "no new element" can surprise only the U.S. peace groups. It welcomes the President's severe warning against communist escalation and wonders how the communists will respond to this "challenge." The daily TIA SANG says the speech furnishes a strong dose of reality for both war-weary Americans and the communists.

A commentary broadcast by Saigon radio declares that the speech "solemnly repeated" the "just and rational" commitments of the United States. Now no one, the radio says, "can reasonably believe that the United States will betray these commitments." A second radio commentary states that the speech has evoked an outpouring of public support in the United States for President Nixon's policy. The commentator concludes that the prestige of the antiwar groups, previously damaged by Pham Van Dong's message in October, has been further lessened by this surge of support for the President.

THAILAND      Both the Bangkok POST and the WORLD give high marks to the President's speech as a firm and clear expression of his policy on Vietnam. The POST says the speech "not only shows how strong are the arguments in favor of the present U.S. policy in Vietnam but also exposes the hollowness of the plea for an unconditional American withdrawal from the war." The WORLD finds the President's "moderate tone" refreshing in contrast to the "harsh and abusive" cries of the antiwar faction and of Vice President Agnew in responding to that faction.

On a critical note, the WORLD expresses the view that the President's "threat" to respond to any significant increase in hostilities has a "hollow sound" in the light of past actions. Further, it believes that the communists have already "been awarded by default what may eventually be termed a victory in Vietnam."

Thai papers widely report statements of praise for the speech by Foreign Minister Thanat Khoman and by the leader of the Democrat Party. The Foreign Minister is quoted as saying that if there were no minority of war protesters in the United States, "the war in Vietnam might have stopped last year or this."

JAPAN      Largely critical comment from Japanese newspapers is typified by the remark in the MAINICHI DAILY NEWS that the speech "contained nothing new or concrete." An editorial in YOMIURI is headlined "Nixon Says Nothing New," and a NIHON KEIZAI dispatch from Washington declares that the speech represents "no

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FBI'S REACTION REPORT

7 NOVEMBER 1969

- 18 -

step forward from the old U.S. policy." Several commentators complain that the President has in effect lessened the possibility of any advance through the Paris negotiations.

There are occasional statements to the effect that the speech was aimed primarily at the American people rather than the North Vietnamese, coupled with expressions of hope that the policy set forth may not be the final word. As ASAHI puts it, "there is a possibility of Nixon's policy line being softened around Christmas."

A favorable editorial in the JAPAN TIMES declares that, while the President broke no new ground, he did show the difficulties of negotiating in the face of Hanoi's intransigence. The editorialist agrees that there is no choice "except to continue the present efforts to de-escalate the war while building up the South Vietnamese capacity to defend themselves."

OTHER COUNTRIES      Newspapers in Nationalist China comment favorably on the firmness and determination voiced in the President's speech. The official CHINA DAILY NEWS concludes that "if appeasers stop trying to sabotage Nixon's Vietnam policy the United States will not be defeated." The English-language CHINA NEWS says the speech was "most courageous" and served to reassure the Saigon government and "the other Asian allies of the United States."

South Korean papers praise the speech, with CHUNG-ANG ILBO observing that it brought a feeling of relief to the allies in the war and the people of South Vietnam. The SEOUL SINMUN urges the United States to do its utmost "to bring about political, economic and social safeguards for South Vietnam prior to the withdrawal of U.S. troops."

A Karachi radio commentary on world reaction to the speech asserts that many people were disappointed by the President's failure to furnish any definite timetable for the withdrawal of U.S. troops. The radios of India and Indonesia carried factual reportage on the speech, but no comment is available.

## THE MIDDLE EAST

Middle East radios gave the speech a moderate amount of news coverage, although only Jerusalem and Ankara featured it prominently in their newscasts. Editorial comment is scarce. Cairo's AL-AHRAM declares that the speech proves "Nixon's policy does not differ in essence

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FBIS REACTION REPORT

7 NOVEMBER 1969

- 19 -

from Johnson's policy of escalating aggression and rejecting all solutions aimed at checking international tension in explosive situations." A Cairo radio commentary concludes: "The clear truth is that Nixon has attempted to deceive, mislead, and drug the American people on the one hand and to implement the aggressive military plan on the other."

Favorable Athens press comment is typified by this quotation from an I VRADHINI editorial: "President Nixon proved once more he is a strong leader fully aware of his important mission and his basic responsibilities to both his country and the free world."

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

Official Statements by TCC Countries on  
President Nixon's November 3 Speech

South Viet-Nam - Statement by President Thieu November 4: "This is one of the most important and greatest addresses of a President of the United States....The policy...which President Nixon has recalled...is the right policy...one which President Nixon and I have completely agreed upon."

Australia - Statement by Prime Minister Gorton November 4: "President Nixon has reaffirmed views which are in close accord with views held and publicly expressed by the Australian Government....The President's statement must be heartening to the people of South Viet-Nam and it should indicate to the other side that they will not succeed in imposing their will and should enter into genuine talks."

New Zealand - Statement by Prime Minister Holyoake November 5: "President Nixon has given a very clear exposition of what the United States and its allies are trying to achieve in South Viet-Nam."

Thailand - Statement by Foreign Minister Thanat November 5: "President Nixon's address shows he is far sighted....President Nixon's courage in standing firm...shows he possesses tolerance, firmness and determination, that he has the courage to act when courage is needed."

The Philippines - Statement by Foreign Secretary Romulo November 5: "President Nixon's address has as its main thrust public opinion in the United States....He marshalled facts to show that the obstacle to negotiated peace in Viet-Nam is the refusal of Hanoi to 'negotiate seriously'....He makes no new proposals....We welcome his reiteration of his Asian policy announced in Guam and in Manila."

South Korea - Statement by Acting Foreign Minister November 5: "Regarding the address of President Nixon November 3, the Korean Government understands and supports the sincere efforts of the Government of the United States in its search for peace in Viet-Nam." (This represents an amendment of an earlier oral statement by the Acting Foreign Minister to the effect that the Korean Government "understands" the sincere effort of the United States in pursuing peace but had doubts as to the response the Communists would make.)

UNCLASSIFIED